

Nutrition Tips In order for you to control your blood sugar it is essential to understand how different foods affect the amount of glucose (sugar) in your blood. Our bodies get energy from three sources; carbohydrates, fats, and protein. Each of these energy sources impact your blood sugar differently.

Carbohydrates Carbohydrates affect your blood sugar the most; in fact they are the only energy source that significantly raises blood sugar. **For this reason carbohydrates are the nutrient we watch closely in women with Gestational Diabetes.**

Foods High in Carbohydrates

- Grains; whole grains, refined grains, and anything made with flour (pasta, bread, tortillas, pancakes, crackers, cereals, granola)
- Starchy vegetables; potatoes, sweet potatoes/yams, winter squash, peas, corn

Carbohydrate Portions Measuring or “counting” carbohydrate portions helps in understanding how carbohydrates affect blood sugar. The simplest way to do this is to use the portion method. One portion equals **15 grams** of carbohydrate. The amount of food that contains 15 grams of carbohydrate varies.

One portion or 15 grams of carbohydrate is equivalent to:

★ 1 slice of bread ★ 1 small corn tortilla ★ 1/2 cup of cereal ★ 1/2 cup of cooked pasta ★ 1/2 cup of cooked rice, oatmeal or other grain ★ 1/2 cup of beans (cannellini, pinto, garbanzo) ★ 1/2 cup of sweet potatoes, white potatoes, corn, peas or other starchy vegetable ★ 1 cup of milk ★ 1 cup of plain yogurt ★ 1/2 cup of fresh fruit (baseball sized piece of fruit) ★ 1/2 of a large banana ★ 1 cup of berries

Counting Carbohydrates Food Labels are a good way to accurately identify the amount of carbohydrates in a particular food.

Steps for Reading a Food Label;

1. Always check the serving size 2. Check the amount of carbohydrate in a serving 3. Next check how much fibre the food contains per serving. It is

recommended that women consume 21-25 grams of fibre a day. 4. Finally check how much protein is in each serving. It is recommended that pregnant women consume between 75-100 grams of protein each day.

Foods That DON'T Raise Your Blood Sugar

Vegetables Aside from starchy vegetables like potatoes, sweet potatoes, winter squash, peas and corn, most vegetables have little effect on blood sugar. The non-starchy vegetables should make up the bulk of your vegetable intake **AND** the bulk of your diet.

Non-Starchy Vegetables

★ Artichokes ★ Asparagus ★
Peppers ★ Broccoli ★ Brussels
sprouts ★ Cabbage ★ Cauliflower
★ Celery ★ Cucumber ★
Eggplant ★ Greens ★ Tomatoes
★ Lettuce; endive, escarole,
spinach ★ Summer squash ★
Zucchini

Fats & Proteins Foods that are mostly made up of proteins and fat do not raise your blood sugar. These nutrients stabilize blood sugar, preventing it from going too high or low.

Fat & Protein

Sources

★ Meats; beef, poultry,
pork ★ Fish & Seafood ★
Eggs & Dairy ★ Nuts &
Seeds

Combining Foods It is important to ALWAYS have a protein/fat source to help stabilize blood sugar levels. For example eating an apple alone will cause your blood sugar to spike BUT if you add some nuts your blood sugar will not rise as drastically.

THE PLATE METHOD The plate method is a way to visually plan out your meals without strictly measuring portions. One half of your plate should be **non-starchy vegetables**, one quarter of your plate should be lean proteins and the remaining quarter carbohydrates. ***Generally no more than 1 cup total, or 30gms of carbohydrates at one sitting.*** Some women may have to consume less than 30 grams of carbohydrate to maintain normal blood sugar.